

George Jones

I'm writing in support of the WIPP Agency-Initiated Modification Draft Permit as proposed by NMED for the following reasons:

- 1) The NMED's proposed permit modifications are essential because the DOE has not fulfilled its legal obligations.
- 2) The legacy waste stored in drums under a tarp has been exposed to the danger of a forest fire for a long time. Now we have more forest fires in the U.S. than ever and a possible "Super El Nino" event likely THIS SUMMER. That increases the risk of hazardous, radioactive materials being released into the air. Once in the air, there is no way to control this material. DOE MUST ACT NOW and that means placing the legacy waste at LANL into the WIPP repository as soon as possible. In other words, prioritizing this particular legacy waste ahead of any other shipments to WIPP.
- 3) While New Mexico citizens not living in proximity to LANL may feel less urgency, we know from the Trinity test that radioactivity in the air can travel great distances and in unpredictable directions. Indeed, this should be a matter of concern to our entire region not just Northern New Mexico. A federal agency is responsible for protecting all of our citizens regardless of which state they live in.

Thank you for your attention.